



Personal and Confidential

May 13, 2019

Via Email and Hand Delivery  
Amy H. Tang, Ph. D.  
Professor of Microbiology and Molecular Cell Biology  
Leroy T. Canoles, Jr. Cancer Center  
Lester Hall, Room 423  
651 Colley Avenue  
Norfolk, VA 23501

**Re: Written Reprimand**

Dear Dr. Tang:

This letter will place you on notice that the nature of the accusations that you have repeatedly made and continue to make against EVMS graduate student and employee, Liza Svyatova, are inappropriate, demonstrate a lack of good judgment on your part, and, therefore, warrant a written reprimand. An explanation follows.

History of Accusations and Responses

Since the summer of 2017, you have accused Ms. Svyatova of, among other matters, disrespect for you as her mentor, academic cheating, scientific misconduct, and attempting to achieve economic gain through the improper use of your own research. You have brought your accusations to the attention of multiple persons within EVMS including Dr. Julie Kerry, Chair of Microbiology and Molecular Cell Biology, Dr. Margaret Morris, Director of Biomedical Sciences Graduate Programs, Paul DiMarco, Director of Technology Transfer, Josephine Wiley, Executive Director of Compliance, Dr. William Wasilenko, Vice Dean for Research, myself, and most recently, Dr. C. Donald Combs, Vice President and Dean, School of Health Professions.

While Dr. Combs properly declined to become involved at this time, all the other above individuals have reviewed your allegations and devoted appropriate attention and analysis to your accusations. While it is not necessary in this letter to recount the substantive allegations you have made, it is noteworthy that none of these individuals who have reviewed your allegations have found merit to them, and persons who are charged with responding to your accusations have not found academic or professional misconduct. Moreover, neither your own nor Ms. Svyatova's potential intellectual property disclosures were deemed sufficiently valuable for EVMS to protect or to provide a basis on which EVMS might proceed to seek a patent.



Despite these conclusions, you have refused to accept such findings and you continue to reassert your claims with no additional support. Such actions have exacerbated the cracks in the relationship between you and Ms. Svyatova who, not surprisingly, perceives your actions as a threat to her completing her doctoral program. In an effort to salvage the relationship between you and Ms. Svyatova, EVMS asked Melissa Scott, Director of Student Rights and Responsibilities, to become involved. Even after this step, your actions towards Ms. Svyatova failed to improve. Given your status as a tenured professional at EVMS, we certainly expected for you to act professionally towards Ms. Svyatova, even if you harbored ill feelings towards her.

#### Actions Leading to This Written Reprimand

The right and even duty to bring to the attention of proper authorities an act of academic or scientific misconduct is well recognized at EVMS. We have departments and personnel to receive, investigate, provide direction, and ultimately make decisions on such matters. You have called upon these resources with respect to Ms. Styatova but have been disappointed and seemingly have disagreed with each decision made. At some point, even in a contentious matter with which you disagree, finality must be reached. That time is now.

While you have a right to express your concerns, it is now imperative that you acknowledge that the persons charged with reviewing your accusations disagree with your positions. More specifically, on February 6, 2019 you were directed by me to refrain from sending further emails to an expanding list of individuals who were not involved in the situation with Ms. Svyatova without subsequent direction on how to properly do so. You acknowledged and indicated you would follow that direction, but you did not do so. In direct contravention of my directions, you continued to communicate your accusations in whatever way you saw fit. You were advised by Dr. Allison Knight in January of this year that meetings of Ms. Svyatova's Dissertation Committee must include the student, direction which you acknowledged, but on February 7, 2019 you sought what you called an emergency meeting without her. Then you failed to attend an already scheduled meeting the next day.

You continued to make various accusations well after earlier accusations on the same or similar topics had been considered and decisions reached. Continuing to accuse and/or complain about such matters indicates a lack of good judgment on your part, a failure to recognize and accept proper authority within EVMS, and an irreconcilable rift between you and your student. As a result, the Biomedical Sciences Program was forced to remove you as chair of the dissertation committee. You are a respected member of the EVMS faculty, but you continue to insist on the correctness of your position even when contrary to the analysis of other professionals, and when detrimental to your student. Most simply stated, EVMS has repeatedly given you multiple reasonable directives to mitigate this matter and you have repeatedly and intentionally disregarded those directives. Even as recently as May 9, after being removed from the dissertation committee and being advised by Dr. Morris that you were



to take no actions that could be perceived as retaliatory (including inflammatory emails to any committee members), you proceeded to send an inappropriate email. This is misconduct and is unacceptable to EVMS.

Accordingly, we issue this written reprimand and advise that any further or repeated accusations against Ms. Svyatova on matters already decided, any failure to assist her in her work when that is requested of you by other professors, and/or any act of retaliation, including continued inappropriate communications with the dissertation committee, will result in further disciplinary action.

Please sign and return this document to me as acknowledgement that you understand the contents of this written reprimand and understand that, if the above issues continue, further disciplinary action may be taken. Note that signing below only indicates that you have received this document, it does not indicate agreement or acceptance. If you refuse to sign, it will be noted accordingly, but does not change the outcome of this written reprimand. You have the right to file a grievance regarding the imposition of this written reprimand. The Faculty Grievance Procedure is set out at page 71 of the Faculty Handbook. Should you wish to file a grievance, you must do so within 30 days of the date of this letter. You may also choose to speak to me about this action informally.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matthew Schenk". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Matthew Schenk, Director of Human Resources

Acknowledged by:

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Amy H. Tang, Ph. D

cc: Julie Kerry, Chair, Department of Microbiology and Molecular Cell Biology  
Elza Mylona, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and Institutional Effectiveness